

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 BIB-01 CCO-00 CIAE-00 OTPE-00 EB-08

FCC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-06 COME-00 L-03 /035 W

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R 041652Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2325

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 2235

USIA FOR DIRECTOR JOHN REINHARDT FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, ETEL, IV

SUBJ: IVORIAN DESIRE FOR ENHANCED BROADCASTING CAPABILITY

1. IN A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH IVORY COAST MINISTER OF INFORMATION DONA-FOLOGO THE MINISTER EXPRESSED TO ME HIS DESIRE -- WHICH HE SAID WAS FULLY SUPPORTED BY PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOINGNY -- TO IMPROVE IVORIAN RADIO SIGNALS TO NEIGHBORING WEST AFRICAN STATES. ACCORDING TO FOLOGO, THE PRESENT IVORIAN TRANSMITTER IS OLD 50 KILOWATT MODEL, PERFORMANCE OF WHICH IS UNRELIABLE WITH RESULT THAT "VOICE OF IVORY COAST" IS VIRTUALLY INAUDIBLE ACROSS IVORIAN BORDERS AND EVEN IN PARTS OF INTERIOR REMOTE FROM ABIDJAN. FOLOGO WANTS TO UPGRADE OR IF NECESSARY REPLACE THIS DEFECTIVE TRANSMITTER WITH BROADCASTING FACILITY TO ACHIEVE 100 KILOWATT POWER AND CLEAR, RELIABLE SIGNALS THROUGHOUT REGION. HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE FRENCH WILL BE HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD AND THEREFORE WONDERS WHETHER WE ARE IN POSITION TO DO SOMETHING.

2. MY REASON FOR BRINGING THIS TO YOUR PERSONAL ATTENTION DURING WHAT MUST BE AN EXCEPTIONALLY BUSY SHAKEDOWN  
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PERIOD AT USIA IS THAT IT SEEMS TO ME THAT FOLOGO'S REQUEST OFFERS INTERESTING POSSIBILITIES FOR VOA. IF WE CAN BE REASONABLY FORTHCOMING, I SEE NO REASON WHY WE COULD NOT EXPLORE WITH FOLOGO THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW OR UPGRADED IVORIAN TRANSMITTER SERVING VOA AS WELL AS IVORIAN NEEDS. CERTAINLY ANYTHING THAT IMPROVED VOA COVERAGE AND AUDIBILITY IN WEST AFRICA WOULD BE EXTREMELY

DESIRABLE.

3. AT THIS EARLY STAGE, I THINK NOTHING MORE WOULD BE REQUIRED THAN TO PROVIDE A GOOD VOA TECHNICIAN WHO COULD SPEND A FEW DAYS IN THE IVORY COAST LOOKING AT THE EXISTING TRANSMITTER AND TALKING TO FOLOGO ABOUT THE FEASIBILITY OF UPGRADING OR REPLACING IT. THIS WOULD SHOW FOLOGO THAT WE TOOK HIS REQUEST SERIOUSLY WITHOUT COMMITTING US TO DO ANYTHING SPECIFIC. ON THE STRENGTH OF THE VOA SPECIALIST'S REACTION AFTER HIS VISIT, WE COULD THEN DECIDE WHETHER THE PROJECT IS ONE IN WHICH THERE IS ROOM FOR U.S. PARTICIPATION AND, IF SO, WHAT KIND OF PARTICIPATION.

4. I REALIZE SOME OF THE PRACTICAL PROBLEMS INHERENT IN MEETING A REQUEST OF THIS KIND BUT NEVERTHELESS I AM CONVINCED THAT FOLOGO'S REQUEST IS WORTH EXPLORING AND YOUR PERSONAL ATTENTION IS WARRANTED TO ASSURE THAT THIS WILL BE DONE. WITH THANKS AND BEST REGARDS.  
STEARNS

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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